

The Interaction Between Artist and Poster Design

Taking the Lithograph Poster During "Art Nouveau" Movement in France as an Example

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Abstract—By dint of historical organization and case study of the interaction between poster design and artists during the period of "Art Nouveau", the paper analyzes the historical environment for artists who had participated in poster design, resolves the interaction and explains the value and significance of the research on the course of "interaction". In terms of argumentation, the paper combines integrated investigation and literature review, attempting to: (1) discuss the change of inertia thinking of poster design influenced by "crossover" interaction in the context of contemporary; (2) provide some useful inspiration for expending poster design thinking and broadening creative horizon; (3) and become a useful supplement to the theory of poster design. The current research on "Art Nouveau" poster is mostly an overview. Domestic research is as follows: European Art in Nineteenth Century (Vol.2) by Zhang Gan describes the situation of Alphonse Mucha's creation and the corresponding poster works in the fourth chapter of the second section; "Art Nouveau" by Gao Bingqiang compares the "Art Nouveau" lithograph poster design from the perspective of history and geography in the second part of the preamble "Boundary and Fusion". Foreign studies such as: Barnicoat. John: A Concise History of the Poster, Lodon: Thames and Hudson; Gallo. Max: The Poster in History, New York: American Heritage; They introduce the emergence and development of poster design during the period of "Art Nouveau". From the information obtained, most of them emphasis on the historical and regional comparison. Studies from the perspective between artist and poster design interaction have yet to be seen on this topic.

Keywords—lithograph; poster; interaction; crossover

I. INTRODUCTION

Lithography was first invented by the German Aloys Sennefelder in 1796 in Bavaria¹. The French painter, print technologist Godefroy Engelmann, completed the more sophisticated Chromolithographie technique in 1837. Lithograph was the main method of poster production during the "Art Nouveau" movement. The artist directly participates in the poster design. The infusion of artistic experience makes the poster be practical². Also, the poster would be

¹ Chen Jiuru, Kou Jianghui. Lithography Tutorial. Hebei Fine Arts Publishing House, October 2006.

² Engelmann's method is to use lithographic black and white version. Each of the colors is overlaid with different version of chromatography. It would use lithography to constitute colorful printing effect. Then, Engelmann used his method to print a set of colorful

sublimated into distinctive lithograph art work. There is wide and direct interaction between the artist and the poster design during this period. This interaction has contributed to the common progress of poster design and lithograph creation.

A. French Lithographs before the "Art Nouveau" Movement

In the 18th century, romanticism, realism, impressionism, symbolism, etc. appeared successively in France. Various kinds of thinking and new technologies emerged. The field of lithograph creation is equally prosperous. Lithography has been matured for a long time. Romantic artists such as Theodore Gericault and Eugène Delacroix also made a large number of lithographs in addition to oil painting. Then, there were outstanding artists such as Honoré Daumier and Odilon Redon, as shown in "Fig. 1" and "Fig. 2".



Fig. 1. Daumier, "The Slaughter in Trunsnonen Street", 1834.

lithographs. It is exquisite. And it could make the polish and modification without the hands. This type of overprinting method is simple and easy. Any person who has the ability to produce black-and-white lithographs can make color works according to the law. Thus, Engelmann created a new era of lithographs. Today's modern printing technology has undergone many changes. It is of efficiency and effectiveness. However, the basic technical principles of four-color overprinting have been used in color printing.



Fig. 2. Redon, "The Temptation of St. Anthony", 1881.

B. Lithograph Posters During French "Art Nouveau" Movement

The so-called "new art" in the history of Western art is "Art Nouveau". This is a proper noun and French vocabulary. The Paris World Expo in 1900 was the beginning of the emergence of "Art Nouveau" in France³. Since then, the French design movement lasted more than 20 years. The areas affected include furniture design, architecture and painting. Since 1895, the French economy has ended a long period of stagnation and depression. And the economic prosperity has brought cultural splendor. The fauvism, cubism, futurism and other modernist ideological trends were born in Paris at the beginning of the century. The lithograph creation and poster design are influenced by it. And the two items interact each other more closely. At this point, the frequent interaction between the artists and the poster design is not accidental.

The relaxation of poster policy and the start of "Art Nouveau" movement have been in a period. Artists engaged in poster design are influenced by the "Art Nouveau" movement⁴. Some artists are not only the participants or even creators of the "Art Nouveau" movement. There are many artists involved in the poster design in France, excepting Cherret, Lautrec, Alphonse Mucha, Edouard Vuillard, Pierre Bonnard, etc.

The dual status of artists and poster designers become a norm. When the artist incorporated personal experience into the poster design, the poster was used as a propaganda tool.

³ Gao Bingqiang. "Art Nouveau". Shanghai Lexicography Press, 2010. Strictly speaking, the "Art Nouveau" movement is an unqualified name. Its real object is a kind of art design thought and the general fashion of art practice which rose in the west more than one hundred years ago.

⁴ Gao Bingqiang. "Art Nouveau". Shanghai Lexicography Press, 2010. Strictly speaking, the "Art Nouveau" movement is an unqualified name. Its real object is a kind of art design thought and the general fashion of art practice which rose in the west more than one hundred years ago.

And it represents the height of artwork. The poster design completely reproduces personal schema of the artists and enriches the connotation of the lithograph poster.

II. INTERACTION BETWEEN POSTER DESIGN AND ARTISTS DURING "ART NOUVEAU" MOVEMENT

The artist directly participated in the design and production of the posters, which made the poster design of the lithograph show multiple and open situation. This multifaceted interaction not only provided a broader artistic perspective and thinking style for the print making at the time, but also provided more possibilities for the richness and diversity of the poster design. And it is of enlightening meaning for today's printmaking and poster design.

A. Influence of Artists' Participation on the Lithograph Poster Design

Representative artists in the French "Art Nouveau" movement include Jules Cheret and Lautrec. Artists' participation plays a decisive role in the evolution of poster schema.

Jules Cheret is an important poster designer and graphic designer in France⁵. He is called "the father of modern poster design" in the history of design. His poster design completed the basic function of the poster. The poster design has been pushed to a new aesthetic level through wonderful lithography technology. The editor of "Poster" and art critic Charles Hiatt wrote: "Without Jules Cheret, Paris will lose one of main features. His posters will be pleasing in the bulletin boards that everyone would go through. His posters will laugh on the outer wall in each cafe. And the posters on the signpost will attract people's attention in front of each window." Indeed, Jules Cheret's excellent use of lithography technology changed the connotation of the poster design⁶. It would no longer be a single medium of information transmission. And it would be given an aesthetic value of posters. His design style led the "Art Nouveau" movement initiated at the end of the 19th century, which brought far-reaching influence to more young artists later. It is worth mentioning that Lautrec has a close personal relationship with Jules Cheret. The two persons also have many exchanges on lithography and poster design. (As shown in "Fig. 3", "Fig. 4")

⁵ Wang Shouzhi. The History of Graphic Design in the World, Chapter 8, China Youth Press, 2002.

⁶ Gallo Max. The Poster in History. New York, 1974. He has designed thousands of posters in his life, which has very important influence on the graphic design in France. His design style has also become the typical representative of graphic design style of the "Art Nouveau" movement. From 1859 to 1866, Jules Cheret was working in the UK during the period when the British "Arts and Crafts" movement started. His poster design was undoubtedly affected by that. In 1866, Jules Cheret returned to Paris to open his own firm and purchased the most advanced color lithography equipment and materials from the United Kingdom. In 1881, Jules Cheret sold his design office to a large publishing company in Paris, "Imprimerie Chaix". And he was the design art director at the publishing company. This gave him more time to make the creation. Before and after 1884, he designed posters would be up to two meters in size. And the number of printed publications can reach 200,000 each year. It can be said that Paris is full of his works.



Fig. 3. Traces of three-color chromatography retained in the blank space of Jules Chéret's poster.



Fig. 4. Jules Chéret and Lautrec stand on front of the poster designed by Jules Chéret.

Lautrec is a post-impressionist painter, and the pioneer of modern poster design and lithograph art. He was called "the soul of Montmartre". Lautrec inherited the style of impressionism painting and was influenced by the Japanese Ukiyo-e painting to develop new realistic painting techniques. His identity has multiple meanings. He is a master of modern French painting, and the pioneer of "Art Nouveau" trend. And at the same time, they are the representatives of poster design in the "Art Nouveau" movement. Lautrec promoted the innovation of the poster design with his painting art. His poster design abandoned the perspective of traditional paintings and turned to planar composition in the Ukiyo-e painting. The subjective space in the viewer's eyes is matched with clever caption text. It successfully attracts the attention of the viewers. Before he created the lithograph poster, he usually made the sketches. The characters in the poster design were drawn from real people. The photography technology had already begun in the 1880s. Lautrec would organize the sketches with pencil sketch. He would also draw a single-line draft that was close

to the post-print effect. Lautrec's lithograph production can be seen in the process of making the lithograph of "Jane Avril checking a print sample", as shown in "Fig. 5", "Fig. 6", and "Fig. 7".



Fig. 5. "Jane Avril checking a print sample" (1).



Fig. 6. "Jane Avril checking a print sample" (2).



Fig. 7. "Jane Avril checking a print sample" (3).

^a The "Jane Avril checking a print sample" is finished ("Fig. 5", "Fig. 6" and "Fig. 7"). In the finished product, people can see those seemingly uncertain but full of "painted" lines. This is also a feature of Lautrec's printmaking. Lautrec made full use of the special features of the lithograph, which can retain the characteristics of the author's hand to the greatest extent. His poster also showed his hand-painted traces in the painting creation. This is final draft before "the edition". In this step, the dimensions, character shapes, scenes, and even the location of the signatures have been arranged. Lautrec's chromatography habits are mostly in the last printed black edition. In this draft, he would also reserve the position of the black font for type setting.

Lautrec drew the representation from Japanese Ukiyo-e painting⁷. And it was embodied in poster design and artistic creation. His paintings or lithograph posters still leave his love for Ukiyo-e⁸. The Ukiyo-e style and its posters are popular in France. According to the study of Lautrec's lithograph poster design, the poster design has revealed solid painting skills and skilled techniques. His poster design shines greatly thanking to his artistic accomplishments⁹. The second is the influence of foreign culture. No matter in the field of painting or design, Japanese Ukiyo-e will have a profound influence on French art in the late 19th century.

During the "Art Nouveau" movement, the artist participated in the poster design. Even, some of them became the leaders of the poster design. From their participation in poster design to the process of leading poster design styles, people can see that: (1) Lithographs are both the artists' creative method and the main method of poster design and printing. This is the natural basis for the interaction between artists and poster design. (2) Artists' direct participation in the poster design and the introduction of personal styles have enabled the lithograph poster to present individualized schemas of different styles and contributed to the diversity of poster designs.

B. Inspired by the Interaction Between Artists and Poster Design During the "Art Nouveau" Movement

This cross-media interaction in the "Art Nouveau" movement is different from the artists' "crossover" in contemporary art. (1) The lithographic technique is the same as the means of creation and printing. The interaction between the artists and the poster design during this period is a "natural" process. (2) Crossover design involves the production process of multiple methods under the context of contemporary art.

The study of the "interaction" process has brought great inspiration to today's lithograph creation and poster design. First, there are differences in boundaries between industries and groups. And then, the "crossover" is proposed today. With the "crossover" approach, more multi-component art language appears in the poster design. Lithograph creation in

the college has obvious advantages in terms of studio conditions and personnel allocation. The lithograph creation in the college can also try to bring new possibilities for poster design and lithograph creation in "crossover" poster design field. Second, people can view from the division of the art industry today. The artists' crossover participation in poster design requires not only cross-industry technology, but also cross-disciplinary thinking. During the "Art Nouveau" movement, lithographs are a kind of fashionable art style and are commonly used by the artists. The printing and production methods of modern poster design have long been different. Computers and printing plants have replaced lithograph and lithograph studios. Artists no longer have enough energy to realize the techniques of mastering modern poster designs (mainly embodied in digital design means). Therefore, the tradition of artists' participation in poster design is limited. The practical reason for this limitation mainly comes from the increasingly refined division of industries. However, this is not a decisive factor that affects "crossover". The division of labor brought by technological development has changed the way artists think about poster design. It really limits the tradition of artists' participation in poster design. The research significance of the interaction process between the lithograph creation and the poster design in the period of "Art Nouveau" lies in this. It should break through the limitations of the industry, establish an organic connection in thinking, enrich the connotation of the poster design and promote the progress of the poster design. Breaking this boundary requires technical intervention. What's more important is that the artist can transform his experience of artistic thinking in original field into a new field.

C. Ablation of Boundary Between Artistic Creation and Poster Design

To be precise, the ablation of the boundary between lithograph creation and poster design during the "Art Nouveau" movement was achieved through the "interaction" process. This interaction cannot be simply defined as "crossover". The lithograph used as a means of poster design has a natural connection with the artists' painting creation. Lithography is both a means of artistic creation and a way of poster design and production. In the poster design, it is necessary to consciously integrate the artists' personal styles. This relationship dissolves the boundaries between lithograph creation and poster design. Poster design in this period is not yet a specialized profession. When a customer needs the poster design, the poster design company will contact with the artist for creation. The artist is hired to make the poster design. The artists employed did not form a professional identity for the poster design. It is different from that today. The graphic designers are specialized profession today. There are many different design categories in graphic design. The boundaries between designers and artists are much clearer than those in the "Art Nouveau" movement.

⁷ Gao Bingqiang. "Art Nouveau". Shanghai Lexicography Press, 2010.

⁸ Ukiyo-e is Japan's custom printmaking. It is a unique folk art that rose from 1603 to 6767 in the Edo period in Japan. It mainly depicts people's daily life, scenery and drama.

⁹ When combing about the life of Lautrec, it is not difficult to discover that his artistic success is no accident. Lifetime of Lautrec. He was born in 1864, did not receive a better education in 1872. When he was 8 years old, he moved to Paris with her mother. He consciously learn to sketch and some painting techniques. In July 1881, Lautrec, who was about 17 years old, lose the university entrance exam. Through one year's efforts, he successfully went on the list the next year. However, he abandoned his enrollment to learn the paintings due to his passion for painting. He learned in the studio of Rene Princeteau, a deaf artist who specialized in painting animals. In 1882, Lautrec's mature skills in running horses led Princeteau to think that he could not teach him. And he introduced Lautrec to Leon Bonnat, a famous academic painter. However, he unexpectedly went to Fernand Cormon's studio, meeting Édouard Manet and Edgar Degas. In 1886, he left the Colmon studio. He set up his own studio in Montmartre. And then, he started his wonderful career.

III. "CROSSOVER" INTERACTION IN PRINTMAKING AND POSTER DESIGN IN CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

The contemporary art practice poses serious challenges to the concept of modernist art authenticity. However, art historians and critics have not made reciprocal responses. And they have proposed a new definition of "artist" —Wu Hong¹⁰

A. Reflections on Poster Design Caused by "Crossover"

Looking at the Xinhua Dictionary, "to cross" as a verb has the meaning of "beyond the boundaries of time or region." "Boundary" as a noun refers to the definition of "margin of a region" or "range of people divided by occupation or gender" and "the largest category of animals, plants and minerals in nature". As a noun, the concept of boundary is relatively broad. "To cross" is an action that breaks the boundaries.¹¹ In English, the word "crossover" has the meaning of interaction and cross-referencing. It is also a translation version commonly used in China. The meaning of "crossover" for artistic creation is not simple transformation of materials or media on the surface. It is a thinking process and working method to break the boundaries of art. As mentioned above, the evolution of posters during the "Art Nouveau" movement was due to cross-interactions among the industries.

Today, artistic creation and poster design have gradually become different industries with increasingly clear boundaries. At the time, the hand-painted traces presented in the poster design work were unanimously consistent with the artists' personal creation. Today, artists engaged in graphic design rarely work in the field of painting. Artists in the same field of painting are rarely involved in graphic design.

The destiny of the poster design is closely related to the artists' direct participation. The way of thinking of the art gives the soul of the poster design. Poster design, as a living art, can only be realized through the reciprocal process of breaking and merging between different boundaries.

B. Reflections on Design and Painting in the Contemporary Context

The participation of artists in the poster design during the "Art Nouveau" movement was universal at the time. And it was a fashion activity circulating in the art circle. The artists directly participated in the poster design, and integrated their own artistic style and personality language into the poster design. It has derived rich and highly artistic poster art work in France during the "Art Nouveau" movement.

The interaction between artist and poster design leaves us with rich art works, changes and values brought about by the inertial thinking of lithographs. It is also practical reference for contemporary lithographs. From this period of history, people should see how printmaking intervene in the field of culture and art in an interactive "crossover" way. The history

¹⁰ Wu Hong, Zhang Xuan Studio, Guangxi Normal University Press, April 2009, p. 7.

¹¹ Business Printing Press. Xinhua Dictionary, Commercial Press, 2007.

of crossover participation in the poster design for artist has also provided reference for printmaking art in today's contemporary art context.

IV. CONCLUSION

In the context of contemporary design, "crossover" has a positive significance for the extension of the creative thinking of lithographs. It also plays an important role in guiding the poster design in terms of personalized schemas and creative methods. "Crossover" did not directly affect the ontology language of the lithograph creation or the poster design. The interaction between the creation and design during the "Art Nouveau" movement gave rise to the combination of lithograph and poster design, resulting in new form of lithograph, which is independent and has its own artistic charm and visual language features.

The issue that this article explicitly proposes is not the change brought by the lithograph creation to the poster design, or the significance of the poster design for the lithograph creation. Through the analysis of the interactive process between the lithograph creation and the poster design during the "Art Nouveau" movement, and analysis of the "crossover" thinking mode, it facilitates the development of lithograph and poster design through interactive work.

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